

621 The Settlement. The political unit of Barama society is the settlement, and its basic principle is the common locality of its members. Settlements vary among themselves in size from seven to seventy individuals. A typical settlement is analyzed in detail in the following chapter on Sawari. Factors which determine membership in this group are kinship, friendship, marriage, and accident of birth. Termination of membership is by individual choice, sentiment of the community antagonistic to the individual in question, death, and non-social reasons such as exhaustion of the soil and of the hunting grounds. Each settlement is presided over by a headman whose authority is decidedly limited and dependent upon the force of his personality or physical strength. The headman is generally chosen by acclaim for life, or for the existence of the settlement, by the adult men of the group. Community affairs are decided informally, in conversation among the adult men when they are together during drinking sprees. Thorough discussion of the various functions of the settlement may be found in the chapter on the Settlement of Sawari.

621 The settlement is usually called by the name of the creek nearest its location. The names of the principal settlements on the Barama are herewith given, with their literal translations.

Aranka — orange

Barama — no meaning

Huri — a fish (*Hoplias malabaricus*)

Kariako — a small deer

Kokerit — a palm tree (*Maximiliana regia*)

Kurasani — an old man went fishing late in the afternoon and saw something in the water. He ducked into the water saying the word "kurasani" as an exclamation of surprise. It has no other meaning, but since that time the creek near where this occurred has been called Kurasani. It is claimed that he saw a supernatural ant-bear which is called tamanua.

Kwamats — bamboo

Kurewa — a leguminous plant which grows in second-growth jungle

Massawini — bright (clear) water, shining water

Parapimai — from parapi, plate; a man dropped a plate in the water and named the creek accordingly

Sawari — a nut-bearing tree (*Caryocar Pekea tuberculosa*)

Sineparu — a bush rope

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595 Her husband died and she came to live with her sister, Miller's
587 wife, who was then alive. It seems that her former husband was a classificatory brother of Miller, so that her appearance in the Miller household may be ascribed either to the levirate or to blood ties which led her to make her home with her closest female relative. According to other members of the settlement, she lived sexually with Miller while his first wife was still alive, but that phase has now passed. At the present time she is a rather pathetic old woman who wears an unconsciously humorous expression of utter futility and hopelessness on her features, an expression which apparently has some foundation in her circumstances of life. For now she is a sort of maiden aunt in Miller's household. Having no living children of her own, she is entrusted with the care of Miller's small children, is relied upon for much of the heavy labor in the field and about the house, and assumes much of the responsibility for the management of the household. And of the luxuries of life she gets the smallest share. Miller speaks of her as of an obligation, but one has the distinct impression that he realizes the practical value of old Mary, who relieves the more attractive Elizabeth of some of the disfiguring labor which would otherwise fall on her shoulders.

595 Charlotte has only recently been taken into Miller's household.
582 She is a young girl, not more than fifteen or sixteen, who has only recently accomplished the physical change into womanhood. In fact she is the only young marriageable woman in the settlement. Columbus, a young man of perhaps twenty-two, is forced to take as wife the little girl Susan, who has not yet reached puberty, although Charlotte would be just the mate for him were it not for Miller's selfishness. Now the exact status of Charlotte in Miller's household was in the process of change at the time of my residence in the settlement. Miller steadfastly refused to admit that she was a "puitu" (wife), but merely said in an evasive manner that he "was keeping her" because her sister Elizabeth could look after her in Miller's house better than David (Charlotte's father) could in his house, since the latter had married another woman following the death of Charlotte's mother. But the fact remains that Miller, acting on the multiple authority resulting from his position as headman of the settlement, head of his own household, and the strongest

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personality of the group, has refused to turn her over to Columbus. David says that he has "given her" to Miller. And it is certain that she is subject to the sexual attentions of Miller. My negro cook, Henry, who slept in a house near Miller, where he could observe the nighttime occurrences in the headman's domicile, took a morbid pleasure in reporting to me confidentially each morning Miller's preference of the night before. On the occasions when he had observed Miller enter the hammock of Charlotte, Elizabeth could usually be observed the following morning weeping or acting otherwise in a depressed way. During my stay at Sawari, Miller's attentions to Charlotte increased in frequency. On two occasions the observing cook reported that Miller had left Elizabeth's hammock almost immediately after entering it and had gone to Charlotte's hammock. On the days following these events, Elizabeth was exceedingly dejected. Also, the last present given by me to Miller, was turned over by him to Charlotte in preference to Elizabeth. During the course of this romance within Miller's household, if it may be so called, I noticed a definite increase in assurance and poise on the part of Charlotte. From these sidelights of Carib family life, we may gain some insight into the workings of personal interaction, emotionalism, and formal status in a polygamous household. Whether or not Charlotte is the wife of Miller in name, she is certainly at least a concubine in fact. As regards her household activities, on the other hand, Charlotte takes a slightly inferior position. That is to say, she is under the direction of Mary and Elizabeth in the activities concerned with field-work and house-work.

Concerning the personalities of the three women in Miller's household, then, we see that Elizabeth is nominal head of the female side of household affairs. She, however, is greatly influenced in practical matters by the advice of Mary, whose greater age and experience she respects, while at the same time she has no reason to feel antagonism toward Mary as a sexual rival. Mary is nominally in the secondary position of rank and authority, but because of the circumstances enumerated above, is able to exert the strongest personal influence of all the three women in matters which are not involved with Miller's sexual feelings. Charlotte nominally is the subordinate one of the three women; but, due to her apparently increasing hold on the affections of Miller

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number and the largest variety of items. Also, Miller or the mem- 422
bers of his household own some of the most valuable imported 556
items obtained in trade. This condition does to a certain extent
reflect Miller's social prominence in the settlement; it may be re-
garded as a result of his social position, but not as a cause. Those 554
outsiders who have dealings with the settlement (such as traders 622 ●
at Towakaima, the prospector Bell, myself) deal with Miller as 464
the recognized head of the settlement, as the man with greatest 439
influence; and he is therefore enabled to acquire more trade goods
than other men. For instance, I required a crew of four men to go
down river to Aranka, where I had left my supplies, and return to
Sawari carrying a portion of the supplies on their backs. The
round-trip journey was a matter of perhaps one hundred miles or
about ten days. It was an arduous job, but one for which each of
the men would be well paid. Negotiations were started with
several men individually, but their enthusiasm was only mildly
aroused, even by the prospect of acquiring fine trade goods for
themselves and their families. Finally the matter was broached
to Miller, who promptly persuaded four young men to undertake
the journey as a favor to themselves, to him, and to me. A deal
was made between Miller and the men whereby Miller obtained a
certain part of the trade goods which each man received as pay,
in return for his services in arranging the employment for them.
Thus Miller, without making the trip himself, received more
goods than any one of the men. But there is no formalization in
an arrangement of this kind, which was made, in this case, simply
as a personal agreement between Miller and the other men. His
social prestige lent a persuasiveness to his words, but, although
the consummation of a successful deal of this kind doubtless added
something in turn to Miller's personal prestige, there is nothing in
his office of headman which enables him to coerce the other mem-
bers of the settlement. This was illustrated later, when the negro
prospector, Bell, requested several laborers of Miller. Although
Miller again tried to persuade members of the settlement to take
the work, he was in this instance unsuccessful because the men
involved considered Bell's trade goods too poor to make the job
worth their while.

A mere survey of material possessions among the Caribs indi- 556
cates a small degree of social importance because in this culture 422
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from which the others are excluded, thus building up its own solidarity.

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Summary. In summarizing the situation in Sawari we are justified in concluding, I believe, that the most important factors of unity are blood relationship, relationship by marriage, friendship, and economic opportunity.

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The factors which tend to disrupt the unity of the settlement are personal dislike, insufficient economic opportunity, death, and divorce.

Leadership of the community is here based on personality, intelligence, initiative, physical ability, and relationship. Thus Miller, the headman of the whole village, was the first man to cut a field in this vicinity, thereby giving a demonstration of his initiative, physical ability, and intelligence. He attracted a group of friends and relatives about him, who on account of all these factors were willing to submit to his authority, such as it is. The same factors are seen to be at work in the off-shoot group represented by Cook's clearing with Cook as its leader. Children and youths are subordinate to adults, but among the latter such inequality as exists is based on personal factors.

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Sawari, therefore, like the other Carib villages on the Barama, is a local grouping of families, united around a leader for the reasons mentioned above. No single factor is alone operative in bringing together such a group, no single factor can be said to be the exclusive cause of its disintegration.

The balance between the forces of unity and of disintegration in a Carib settlement is exceedingly delicate. The membership is continually shifting, and the life of an average settlement is apparently comparatively short. Sawari was founded perhaps ten years ago by Miller, after his sojourn in the toils of the law. It is still growing, but in a fluctuating fashion. Many of the newly married residents have been members for only a year or two. Joseph (David's son) joins the settlement, Henry (Caroline's husband) leaves in the space of a few months. It is quite likely that further additions and subtractions will take place at about this rate until the settlement for one reason or another is finally abandoned.

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assembly, nor is any individual endowed with the authority to 671
make regulations for the other members of the group. The Indians
are, of course, without writing. And, as might perhaps be expected
under such conditions, there is also an absence of what might be
called courts or judges. How, then, are the legal and judicial
functions, which we have just mentioned as being necessary for
group life, performed? Let us look for a moment more closely at
the social organization in an effort to throw more light on the
question.

The factors of tribal unity are territory, language and certain 619
culture traits which are held in common, but are distinct from
those of other tribes. Within itself, however, the tribe as such
has no political functions and little social importance. The politi-
cal unit is the settlement, a group varying in size from fifteen to
fifty individuals who live and cultivate fields in the same immediate
vicinity. These groups are located at wide intervals, usually in
the jungle back from the river, and contact between them is con-
sequently not close. Over each settlement is a headman whose
authority, however, is decidedly limited and without sanctions.
The headman is generally chosen by acclaim for life, or for the 622
term of the existence of the settlement, by the adult men of the
group. Several factors enter into his choice: his personality, his
economic power, his physical strength. Occasionally a son or other
relative of a former headman may be chosen, although such a
relationship is by no means the deciding factor. In so far as the
headman's personality carries weight, his opinions are respected
and in that sense might be construed as part of the law, but few
sanctions pertain to him which are not included among the prerog-
atives of the other members of the group as well. In other words,
the headman has no special power to enforce his orders, and in
case they are violated, punishment of the offender follows the lines
laid down for all personal offenses.

As has been already stated, there is no constituted law-making 623
body or legislative council. It is true, of course, that the adult 626
men of the settlement do consult together on a great range of
matters, but these consultations usually take the form of in-
dividual exchanges of opinion, much as gossip and conversation
take place among ourselves. The only occasion on which all the
men of the settlement are likely to be together is during one of the

[End plate 11]



a. Appearance of a Carib man who works for one of the trading posts. This type of costume is unusual on the Barama.



b. The headman of Sawari, Miller, with his piai rattle. Note forehead covered with white powder and fillet of cotton on head.

241 field. Individuals have cut extensive fields to support their
*177 competition for the office of Amerindian captain. The impact of these
654 recent departures marked by the increased escape of energy from the
• (622) local forest ecosystem as well as the deterioration of the exposed
soil through lateralization at some point will impose limiting
factors on the agricultural development of the area.

222 The forest flora which is gathered for food and other uses is to
824 some extent defined by individual knowledge. The identification as
262 well as the preparation are knowledge held by a limited number of
(463) people. For some fruits, nuts, and roots no commonly known name
exists in the Carib language. This follows from the nature of the
food quest. An individual is constantly searching out these vegetable
foods during the course of his daily activities. Consequently, the
list of forest flora foods must remain partial. Those recorded by
Gillin and additions made by 1970-71 field work are presented in
Table 2.

Faunal Resources

22 The faunal resources from the forest are recorded in Table 3.
262 Those reported by Gillin are presented first, then the current
additions. As the 1970-71 list was collected in the air strip
vicinity, the additions reflect a more careful scouring of the
available foods as a result of a heavier concentration of population
in one location. On an individual basis, taboos against eating
monkey and tiger (Gillin 1936:10) have been abandoned. Also, this
list cannot encompass the many sporadic and minute sources. A person

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657 facilities for local community development have been introduced in the period of a few months. The structure through which they are available is diagrammed in Figure 3. Baird's autonomous position as a gold miner has changed. As Project Officer, he is now responsible for locally implementing government programs and supervising facilities that cut across the responsibilities of several Ministries. These include the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agricultural and Natural Resources, and Ministry of Local Government. In addition to his position in the Interior Development Department, Baird is also an agent for the Post Office Department, Civil Aviation, and Guyana Airways Corporation. By July 1970, the Baramita Air Strip community was established. Two new buildings constructed along the air strip to house government personnel add to the appearance of a settlement.

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[66] In addition to these services for the population, the Ministry of Local Government has provided for the development of local Amerindian leadership. As with all Amerindian populations in the interior, local elections are held. The first occurred in the Upper Barama River area at In Time in October 1967. A second election was held at the air strip in October 1971. A Captain and three Councillors are chosen. The Captaincy is a salaried position; councillorship is not. Thus, one more source of external resources is available to this population.

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657 The question of local land tenure also has received government attention. However, the Amerindian request for land titles occurred without the participation of the Upper Barama River Caribs who have

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2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
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Chief Interior Development Officer
and Amerindian Development Officer
in the Department of Interior Development
under the Ministry of Economic Development

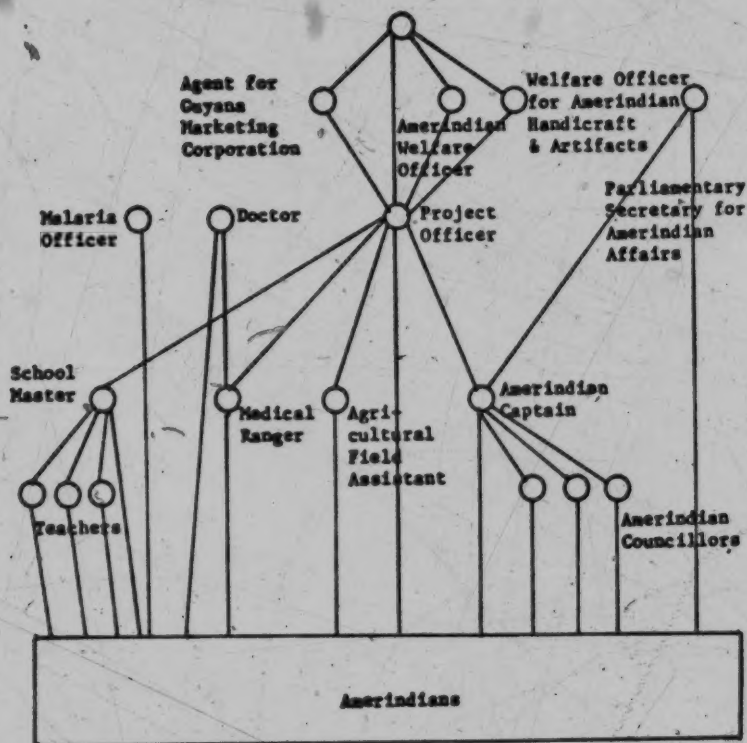


Figure 3. Structure of Governmental Employees.

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to employment opportunities. Around the mine In Time, a nucleation of population is clearly evident. The settlements further away from the mine were the first abandoned. Many of these people left for Matthew's Ridge or the Cuyuni River. However, the employment and market opportunities at In Time attracted and supported the largest portion of the local Carib population.

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The permanent workers at In Time had no large farms. They resided close to the mine and bought provisions. There were two of these residential groupings, one around the mine and one at Big Creek. In the spring of 1969, there were 103 residents near the mine and sixty-eight at Big Creek. Also, three satellite settlements dependent on frequent opportunities to sell provisions and occasional employment were located less than ten miles away from the mine. These were Aranka with a population of ninety and Baramita⁷ with forty-seven (see Figure 8). In addition, fifty-three people were located at Baramita Air Strip itself. By this time the declining activities at the mine and the limited opportunities provided by the missionaries attracted some people to the Air Strip. The remaining population was located in more remote settlements including thirty-nine at Piai Creek, thirty-six at Korotoko, thirty-four at Barama Head, twenty-nine at Korisho, and five at Maswakai.⁸ The average population size of these more remote settlements was about thirty-five people.⁹ Thus, the total population was 504.

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It must be noted that the Amerindian Captain has been active in attempting to settle Carib people at the Air Strip. In 1969 he had a measure of success among the 119 Caribs from the five settlements

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175 in the headwaters of the Barima River. He was able to convince
*177 several men from Cedar, one of the settlements, to cut a communal
361 farm at Black Water Creek, about two miles north of the air strip.
• 622 For a time, twenty-four people from Cedar were living there. Later,
they went back to Cedar, only sporadically returning to camp out for
a few days or so to make use of the facilities at the Air Strip. It
is clear that this smaller Carib population from the headwaters of
the Barima River remains peripheral in an analysis of cultural change
among the Upper Barama River Caribs.

*177 Figure 9 summarizes the settlement pattern in the Upper Barama
175 area in 1969. The greatest nucleation of population occurred in
361 zone a. There, 171 people were directly supported by mining activi-
464 ties at In Time. In zone b, the larger but more dispersed population
of 190 was more indirectly involved in the mining economy. Lastly,
the remaining population of 143 was dispersed in five more independ-
ent settlements in the rain forest. Settlements are varied in
purpose. However, the Upper Barama River Caribs as yet do not have
two or more house sites where they engage in different activities.

[657] This occurs with the introduction of government programs and services
at Baranita Air Strip.

*177 During 1970-71, the population located in the Upper Barama River
361 area was centralized in varying degrees around Baranita Air Strip
162 (see Figure 10). In the summer of 1971, there were 333 residents at
the Air Strip. Of this number, 232 are permanent residents. The
remainder are mobile, part-time residents who also maintain farms in
the more remote settlements. Also in the spring of 1971, Aranka had

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2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

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The trade store was the main vehicle for the involvement of the remainder of the population in regional exchange. With the establishment of Baird's enterprise, there was a constant call for local foods which the trade store stocked. Caribs not employed at the mine were then able to sell these foods on a more or less planned basis. The residents of Aranka, Baramita, and later the Air Strip, did this regularly. Caribs in the more remote settlements made more infrequent trips. However, the quantities required were limited. No special fields were cut nor special crops planted. Part of the regular subsistence production was used for these exchange purposes. Also, there operated informal consignment agreements. When a supply of meat, cassava, plantains, yams, or whatever ran low, individual men were invited to bring these to the store. Often no money changed

[437] hands. Rather, small accounts were kept. In addition to exchanges centralized by the trade store, some exchanges occurred directly between Caribs. The prices used were those at the trade store. Also, for a short time, the missionaries contributed to the market opportunities in the area by occasionally hiring a few laborers, by buying some local handicraft items, and by selling food and clothing.

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Before the mine closed in 1969, one other development occurred which further involved this population in regional exchange networks.

A local administrative structure, devised and implemented by the Ministry of Local Government, has been imposed on Amerindian populations to promote national political integration.³ Amerindian

[666] offices were first introduced among the Upper Barama River Caribs with an election held at In Time in October 1967. From among four

*177 candidates who were unemployed at the time, one man was selected by
175 the largest number of votes to serve as Captain for a four-year term.
657 Other candidates for the Captaincy became Councillors. Of these
• 622 offices, only the Captaincy is a salaried position. It receives
[465] \$150 a month.⁴ The duties of these offices, which have been more
clearly defined with the government settlement project at Baramita
Air Strip, have provided a basis for the redistribution of the
Captain's salary to a wider section of the population. However, the
office of Captain among the Upper Barama River Caribs does not differ-
entiate the officeholder in any sustained fashion from the rest of
[464] the population. Similar to other forms of local employment in the
Upper Barama River area, the Captaincy is not a vehicle to gain a
control in regional markets or to accumulate deployable forms of
capital.

*177 Previous to the establishment of the mining companies, the
175 dispersed Carib settlements tended to be closed with regard to obtain-
361 ing and sharing local subsistence resources. This pattern was appar-
438 ently little disturbed by the first trade goods brought by the mobile
porknockers. However, the money economy and the centralized channels
of regional exchange introduced by the mining companies markedly
[511] altered Carib subsistence. External resources came to be critical to
the subsistence patterns of the expanding local population, and
settlements became more centralized around their source. In 1969,
Baird's mining activities were directly supporting 171 individuals
or 33.9 percent of the total Carib population at the time. Located
nearby at Baramita, Aranka, and the Air Strip, another 190 individuals

*177 patron-client relationships in which Carib clients could also make
43 limited demands on their employer. Generally, the degree to which
[570] these new opportunities were available to Caribs was reflected in a
*177 neglect of bush agriculture. Over time, this neglect proved to be
43 precarious. These markets dissolved with the cessation of gold
241 mining, leaving former miners and their families with no immediate
relationship to a source of provisions. The new governmental offices,
• [622] including that of Amerindian Captain, and officeholders do not have
[571] a record of sufficient permanence and assured access to stores of
external resources to aggregate around them individuals in client
positions. Although prominent among the new markets, cash crops have
not replaced subsistence crops to any substantial degree. During the
period of field work, no Carib was dependent for survival on the cash
crops he grew. Rather, this activity was pursued in addition to sub-
sistence farming and the income was used as pocket cash to make pur-
chases among the commercial items at the trade store. In this
manner, Caribs were not critically dependent on networks for the
regional exchange of such refractory commodities as agricultural
produce.

*177 In short, regional markets have been impermanent. Even so, they
43 have made available wages and external resources that have attracted
241 the participation of the Carib population. Caribs can take part in
these market opportunities and hedge against their insecurity only
in so far as they maintain some level of bush agriculture. This is
possible without restriction, as throughout the various human
occupations in the Upper Barama River drainage basin, there is no

175 A headman

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• 622 was recognized in each settlement (John Miller in Savari), but his authority rested on his influence. Aspects of personality, the number of relatives, as well as physical strength were factors in the choice of headman. Although the duties of headman lacked definition, for the most part they involved coalescing group opinion and action. All of this was done informally. Group action would be taken against individuals who threatened the pattern of sharing resources and rendering assistance within the settlement. Ostracism, exile, or, more rarely, violence would be employed (Gillin 1934:337).

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628 At this time, the Upper Barama River Caribs constituted an indigenous population within a British colony. In this colonial environment, there was no organization among these Caribs for war or defense which would compel leadership (Gillin 1934:344). Dispersed in the rain forest, remote from the center of European power, there was no other basis for unity among this population. Before extensive regional trade and a money economy were introduced by the mining companies, these dispersed settlements tended to be closed with regard to patterns of obtaining and sharing subsistence resources. Exchanges among settlements involved shifts of personnel. Increasingly, the boundary of the resource sharing social unit has become constricted within the larger, more stabilized settlements around centralized networks of regional exchange.

Organisation for Gold Mining

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In addition to centralizing settlements, employment and other market opportunities provided by gold mining activities from 1940 to

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

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*177 sons-in-law. The fourth consisted of a man, about fifty, his wife
592 and children and his old father and mother. Lastly, one man, also
621 about fifty, has had his father-in-law with two adult sons and all
• [622] their wives and children move into his cultivated field. This last
residence situation had persisted for about two years when the Amer-
indian Captain called attention to it as a case of excessive ex-
ploitation.

[595] Aranka, on the other hand, is outstanding in that one man main-
tains five wives who have had, to date, thirty-six children. He is
the center of one large clearing with his various fathers-in-law and
sons-in-law around him. In addition, two new clearings of Karisho
people were being established at Aranka in the spring of 1971. One
was inhabited by a nuclear family, another by a nuclear family ex-
tended by the wife's old father and his crippled wife. A young man
who is deaf and dumb and moves about from relative to relative was
also living in this last clearing. He is the old man's brother's
[166] son. To some extent, this residence pattern is the result of the
abbreviation of the continual movement of households due to the
advantageous location near the center of external resources, and
the market opportunities at this center have tended to dissolve the
ties of general reciprocity between men in different clearings as
will be discussed at a later point.

The residence situation at the Air Strip is more complex than
that in either satellite settlement. The households of previous
miners and households from the more remote areas have moved there.
Currently, there are twenty clearings. Their general locations

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

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[428] served to extend the household of the current Captain. He is about fifty and has two wives, one of whom he married as a widow and one who is very young. Extra adult members have been added by including a daughter of the older wife, and a daughter and granddaughter of the Captain's stepmother. They have all brought a son-in-law into this extended household. In this last case, as in all these residential arrangements, there is no promise of inheritance or other legacy beyond the situation to hold extended households together.

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[596] External resources have resulted in centralized settlements within which kinship groups residing in different clearings tend to be closed resource-sharing social units. For the most part, the clearings are inhabited by single households composed of extended families.

In no case are individuals or young, childless couples living alone. Co-residence may be considered an index of extended cooperation and sharing of resources. Men who reside in the same clearing have partnerships in cultivated fields which along with hunting and gathering and occasional employment are the major sources of subsistence since the closing of the gold mine. The pattern of more extended reciprocity which existed prior to the availability of external resources has been changed. No longer is there any marked occurrence of the exchange of assistance among groups of men who are brothers or parallel cousins. In the cases in which adult brothers are in co-residence, usually their father is also present. Men in much more circumscribed relationships; i.e., father, son, son-in-law, now tend to cooperate in securing subsistence from local as well as external resources. Within the pattern of trans-generational recruitment,

*177 during the afternoon. The families of the working men would arrive
476 and take part in this cassiri spree. No residue of obligations per-
464 sisted from these group work days.

• [622] Also, the Captain used his income and agricultural resources to
*177 recruit men for projects he undertook as officeholder. At times, men
464 were gathered to assist in cutting fields for Carib households newly
moving to the Air Strip. The first self-help project in October 1970
involved building school desks and benches. A carpenter who had come
to make repairs on the government residence houses stayed on to pro-
vide designs for the furniture and to supervise their construction.
Every weekday morning for about three weeks, several men would turn
out for this work. The second self-help project occurred in January
1971. The abandoned missionary lands were cleared of secondary bush
for farms. During the mornings, over a period of nineteen days, the
Captain and several other men cut down bush. At the beginning, one
man who is a particularly good hunter was provided ammunition to hunt
for the rest. Also, the Captain distributed other food from his farm
and the trade store. In each case, specific work groups lacked per-
[E71] manence. The composition of groups changed every day of these
projects. In all cases, the men received some immediate return for
their participation.

Smaller groups of men have also been employed by other Caribs.
Groups of men from the same residential clearing as well as individ-
uals have been paid to do other tasks, including building houses and
cassiri kanus, and clearing fields. Brothers, sons, fathers, fathers-
in-law, and sons-in-law not sharing residence have been paid to do
this work.

* 177 and as others moved to the Air Strip, the prominent Councillor was a
476 pronounced source of agricultural assistance. At one time or another,
624 he helped all households that moved to the Air Strip. To those who
[482] requested it, he would give a wolisha (a large basket for carrying
loads on the back) of manioc tubers or processed cassava cakes.
Clearly, the Councillor was not providing a major portion of sub-
[135] sistence for anyone outside his household. Yet, he was a source of
temporary relief during a time when farms were not yet productive and
other sources of subsistence foods were scarce. Also, the Councillor
made available manioc stalks necessary for planting new fields.

* 177 Partly as a consequence of these activities, the prominent Councillor
• 622 was elected as Captain during the second local election held at the
624 Air Strip in October 1971.
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As he is a long time resident of the Air Strip and had expanded
his already established agricultural fields, the Councillor was able
to make allegiances among the population in this manner. During the
[241] spring of 1971, he had 16.2 acres under cultivation compared to the
incumbent Captain's farms, which amounted to 11.3 acres. This con-
trasts to 5.8 acres which was the average size of the cultivated
fields of the remaining eighteen clearings at the Air Strip. How-
ever, this does not represent any sustained differential relationship
to local resources. Agricultural fields are not exchanged. Rather,
land holding is determined by the labor invested to develop it and
remains a resource until it is reclaimed by the forest.⁶

* 177 Over time, the size and stability of Carib settlements have
361 changed. Increasingly, the population has centralized around sources
of external resources.

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

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182 During employment in mining, a spree lasted only a number of hours. Participation clearly crosscut resource-sharing social units. The spree served to bring together people whose daily activities

tended to provide no other basis for contact. The cassiri spree was also used to gain job reinstatement in inducing other Carib miners to neglect work schedules. At Baramita Air Strip, cassiri sprees continue to bring a large number of people together in a party atmosphere for only a number of hours. It has been held to distribute food and clear up any residue of obligations for participants in a kaiyap or group work day. Also, the Amerindian Captain has sponsored sprees which include all the residents of the Air Strip and coincide with national Guyanese holidays. At other times, sprees are held among neighbors. Time depth is achieved only when a number of people hold sprees more or less in succession, which might happen during a weekend. Participation is by verbal invitation and the participants at each spree vary. In the different organizational contexts, the cassiri spree has been used as a communication event for different expressions and to convey different purposes.

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594 Reports on other Carib populations affected by regional economies are available. The villagers of Cachama and Mamo in Venezuela (Schwerin 1966) and the Maroni River Caribs of Surinam (Kloos 1971) tend to be primarily organized in nuclear families. The Caribs of Cachama and the Maroni River reserve some economic ties within a larger kinship group, usually the nuclear families of parents and adult offspring, especially daughters. Families in such a group tend to live near each other. Basically, these Caribs remain